The Hohenstaufen and the Shape of History

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Modern interest in the Hohenstaufen era in Germany and the modern academic study of medieval German literature have a common root, in the Napoleonic period and in the years following Napoleon's downfall. It is a conjunction well illustrated by the life of a today largely-forgotten founding giant of medieval German literary studies: Hans Ferdinand Maßmann – a correspondent of the Grimms and an early editor, alongside much else, of the *Sachsenspiegel* and the *Kaiserchronik*.[1] Born in 1797 as the son of a Berlin clockmaker, Maßmann was to have a remarkable career, encompassing poetry, pedagogy, and political agitation, alongside medieval German philology. A disciple of *Turnvater* Ludwig Jahn, he would devote his later years to invariably fruitless attempts at persuading the German princes to introduce public gymnastics, to fortify the people in body and patriotic spirit. Maßmann had been present at the festivities on the Wartburg in October 1817, where he had instigated the notorious nocturnal burning of purportedly unpatriotic books, including copies of the *Code Napoleon*.[2] This hothead reputation was to prove a career obstacle to the youthful Maßmann, with Freiherr vom Stein personally vetoing his application to join the recently-founded *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. With age eventually came respectability, however, and chairs at the universities of Munich and Berlin. And youthful radicalism lay far in the past when, in January 1850, Maßmann addressed the *Berlinische Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache* on the subject of Frederick Barbarossa in the Kyffhäuser.[3]

By now a loyal servant of the king of Prussia, he judged the moment auspicious for his lecture, with the Prussian-sponsored Erfurt Union – an attempt by the princes to steer the revolutionary spirit of 1848 into safely monarchist channels – about to convene in a town visible from the summit of the myth-laden Kyffhäuser mountain itself.[4] Maßmann left his audience in no doubt about the contemporary relevance of his subject-matter. He linked Barbarossa's Hohenstaufen dynasty to the contemporary Prussian Hohenzollerns. He

[1] For what follows, see Joachim Burkhard Richter, *Hans Ferdinand Maßmann: Altdeutscher Patriotismus im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin/New York 1992 (Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der germanischen Völker 224 [N.F. 100]).

[2] Günther Steiger, *Urburschenschaft und Wartburgfest: Aufbruch nach Deutschland*, Leipzig u.a. [2]1991, S. 122–124. Characteristically, Maßmann later compared his action with Luther's burning of papal bulls and canon-law books.

[3] H[ans] F[erdinand] Maßmann, *Kaiser Friedrich im Kiffhäuser: Vortrag, gehalten am Stiftungsfeste der Berlinischen Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache*, Quedlinburg/Leipzig 1850.

[4] Walter Bußmann, *Zwischen Preußen und Deutschland: Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Eine Biographie*, Berlin 1990, S. 296–300.

identified the Hohenstaufen emperors as inaugurating a proto-Protestant drive for church reform that would later be taken up by Luther, and that he hoped would soon reach a final fruition in a united Germany. Yet the mythologized, subterranean Barbarossa was also for Maßmann essentially one of the old Germanic gods, in thinly Christianized form. And the Kyffhäuser itself, he emphasized, was but one of many such magic mountains, scattered throughout the German-speaking lands, the mythic abodes of monarchs and heroes, who down the centuries had offered a hope to the common people more potent than any mere constitution.[5]

It was Friedrich Rückert's *Barbarossa* poem of 1817 (which Maßmann recited during his lecture) that had done more than anything to popularize among a literate public the legend, anthologized shortly before by the Grimms and by other folk-tale collectors, of the Hohenstaufen emperor banished to slumber underground.[6] And it was Rückert who gave the ancient tale its contemporary political edge: the Kaiser's eventual reawakening, restoring to the light of day the glory of his Empire – *des Reiches Herrlichkeit* – would be the moment when a united German nation reclaimed its inheritance. Heavyweight support was soon forthcoming in the shape of Friedrich von Raumer's six-volume *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihre Zeit*, published between 1823 and 1825, which became the inspiration for countless literary as well as more strictly historical evocations of the Staufer in the years that followed.[7]

My concern in this paper is with the relationship between these modern memories, myths, and appropriations of ‚the Hohenstaufen and their times' and the perception of those rulers and their age by contemporaries. Seen from this perspective, the striking thing about Maßmann's engagement with the figure of Barbarossa is its almost entirely modern character. Underpinned by the patriotic enthusiasms and characteristic bookish preoccupations of the generation of educated Germans who had grown up during the Wars of Liberation, it encodes their disappointments during the subsequent Restoration era, the hopes and fears of 1848, and the new opportunities signalled to some by the rise of Prussia. The twelfth-century Hohenstaufen emperor here serves as little more than a cypher for a series of characteristically nineteenth-century bourgeois concerns, although distilled into Maßmann's

[5] Maßmann (as Anm. 3), S. 23–25.
[6] Friedrich Weigend, Bodo M. Baumunk and Thomas Brune, *Keine Ruhe im Kyffhäuser: Das Nachleben der Staufer. Ein Lesebuch zur deutschen Geschichte*, Stuttgart/Aalen 1978, S. 39–45.
[7] Friedrich von Raumer, *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihrer Zeit*, 6 Bde, Leipzig 1823–1825. For the influence of von Raumer's work, see Stefanie Barbara Berg, *Heldenbilder und Gegensätze: Friedrich Barbarossa und Heinrich der Löwe im Urteil des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Münster/Hamburg 1994 (Geschichte 7), S. 51–62.

distinctive personal mode of antiquarian Teutonophilia.[8] In what follows I will seek to identify what the Hohenstaufen era itself contributed to these much later views of its significance: to ask how complicit the emperors and their followers were in their own modern mythologization. Did the period possess or acquire any coherent shape and meaning in writings produced at the time and, if so, do these bear any relation to the shape and meaning imposed on the Staufer era in modernity? Is the very idea of such an ‚era' an entirely modern construct? Just how modern is the modern myth of the Hohenstaufen?

The sheer, unshakable ubiquity of the Staufer period seems to pose the first obstacle to its exploration. A word-search, under ‚Hohenstaufen', in the on-line catalogue of Berlin's *Staatsbibliothek*, for example, yields almost a hundred thousand separate results. The reification of the Hohenstaufen and their times has proved tenacious enough easily to outlast the discrediting, in the mid-twentieth century, of the modern German nationalism with which they appear so closely, although paradoxically, bound up.[9] The roots of the myth were deeper and more numerous, and they proved capable of fresh growth in changed times. When the state of Baden-Württemberg celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1977, its ambitious minister-president, Hans Filbinger, chose the Hohenstaufen to symbolize – or more accurately, to construct and nurture – Baden-Württemberg's historic identity and unity. The results were spectacular. The exhibition which Filbinger instigated, on „The Age of the Staufer", staged at the Old Residence in the centre of Stuttgart from late March to early June, smashed all existing records for an event of its kind.[10] Around seven hundred thousand visitors crammed themselves into the narrow exhibition space. At times the police had to intervene to restore order among the heaving and jostling crowds.[11] The iconic four-volume catalogue was soon changing hands on the black market for sums well above its cover price.[12]

The organizers took pains to distinguish modern images of the Hohenstaufen from their high-medieval reference-points. A whole section of the exhibition was dedicated to

[8] For the nineteenth-century Barbarossa cult: Camilla G. Kaul, *Friedrich Barbarossa im Kyffhäuser: Bilder eines nationalen Mythos im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2 Bde, Köln u.a. 2007 (Atlas N.F. 4).
[9] For the reification of the Staufer era in older accounts, see Erich Maschke, *Das Geschlecht der Staufer*, München 1943, S. 9*:* „Keines der mittelalterlichen deutschen Königsgeschlechter ist so geschlossen in seiner politschen Haltung und so einheitlich in seiner geschichtlichen Wirkung, wie das Haus der Staufer"; Ernst Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite*, Berlin 1927, S. 75: „in jener einzigen Stauferzeit [...], von römisch-südlichem Licht übergossen und durchwärmt". It is not without reason that modern general histories of the Staufer devote significant attention to their post-medieval commemoration: Odilo Engels, *Die Staufer*, Stuttgart [6]1994, S. 192–202; Knut Görich, *Die Staufer: Herrscher und Reich*, München [3]2011, S. 9–19.
[10] Martin Große Burlage, *Große historische Ausstellungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1960-2000*, Münster 2005 (Zeitgeschichte – Zeitverständnis 15), S. 21–25.
[11] *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 16 May 1977 (‚Chaos bei den Staufern').
[12] *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 30 March 1977.

post-medieval reflections of the dynasty and its era, in everything from Romantic art and literature to contemporary consumer kitsch.[13] Displays of Staufer-themed beermats particularly outraged the traditionalists. Avant-garde film-maker Alexander Kluge produced two short films, looking with characteristic irony at the Staufer themselves and at the people involved with the exhibition.[14] (His more famous *Deutschland im Herbst* would later inspect the same year of 1977 from seemingly very different standpoints.) Yet in the end it was the myth that won. The crowds came, as one of the exhibition organisers would put it many years later, „to bathe in gold", not to look at beermats.[15] They came, like some lucky peasant stumbling upon a secret doorway to the Kyffhäuser, to gaze upon the face of Barbarossa himself.

The difficulties with speaking of the Hohenstaufen at all are underlined by an inscription on the marble pillar which was set up on the eponymous hilltop, to celebrate a later Baden-Württemberg anniversary, the fiftieth, in 2002: the name, we read, encompasses „a mountain, a castle, a dynasty" as well as „an epoch" and, of course, „a myth". The conjunctions are neither necessary nor straightforward. Locality can build its own historical narratives, can make its own visible connections, and can form its own significant patterns, within the landscape itself. Locality has underpinned modern constructions of the Hohenstaufen to a remarkable degree. A central part in this was played by the town of Göppingen, in the shadow of the mountain, where the long-serving mayor, Dr Herbert König, was the driving force in establishing in the 1970s a network of tourist routes – the *Straße der Staufer* – joining up significant regional sites and centred on the town itself.[16] A footpath through the forest, leading from Göppingen to the Hohenstaufen, still celebrates the memory of its promoter, Oberbürgermeister König. The ‚Staufer pillar' on the summit is but one of many such monoliths, established at sites, mostly in Germany, claiming links of various kinds to the dynasty.[17] Their octagonal form invokes the medieval imperial crown but also Castel del Monte, the mysterious castle built for the last Staufer emperor, Frederick II, far to the south of the Alps in Apulia, in his hereditary kingdom of Sicily. At the points of their densest concentration, these pillars present an account of Hohenstaufen history that can not only be

[13] Burlage (as Anm. 10), S. 50; Thomas Brune and Bodo Baumunk, „Wege der Popularisierung", in: *Die Zeit der Staufer: Geschichte – Kunst – Kultur: Katalog zur Ausstellung*, Bd. 3, Stuttgart 1977, S. 327–335.
[14] „Nachrichten von den Staufern"; „Die Menschen, die das Staufer-Jahr vorbereiten": in Alexander Kluge, *Sämtliche Kinofilme*, Frankfurt am Main 2007, Disk 9.
[15] Interview with Dr Thomas Brune, 9 September 2016.
[16] Manfred Akermann, *Die Staufer: Ein europäisches Herrschergeschlecht*, Stuttgart 2003, S. 11. The route, later extended, is still signposted and advertised: http://www.germany.travel/de/freizeit-erholung/ferienstrassen/strasse-der-staufer.html.
[17] Gerhard Raff, *Stauferfreunde stiften Stauferstelen*, Stuttgart [5]2014.

read but seen and experienced as interconnected points in the landscape. At the so-called ‚Wäscherschloß' in the Beutetal, between Göppingen and Schwäbisch Gmünd, walkers can read of how Frederick, duke of Swabia, the son of Frederick of Büren, in 1079 took in marriage Agnes, daughter of the emperor Henry IV. From there they can fix their eyes on the Hohenstaufen across the valley, which they have by now also learned Duke Frederick founded. They can then proceed to re-enact with their own aching feet the historic ascent of the Staufer dynasty. In the small museum at the foot of the mountain (another mid-1970s initiative of Oberbürgermeister König) they can admire copies of the ‚Cappenberg bust' and of a portrait-head of Frederick II. Should they continue to Göppingen, they might discover that the self-proclaimed *Hohenstaufenstadt* has been twinned since 1971 with Foggia in Apulia, distant site of another Staufer residence.[18]

Experienced on the ground, or encountered in the exhibition gallery, or invoked in any number of book titles, the Hohenstaufen and their times appear to possess undeniable substance and clear narrative shape. Yet when we turn to the medieval evidence, and to the recent specialist scholarship bearing upon it, coherent narratives and clear meanings have never seemed more elusive. It is not simply that some of the crucial links in the traditional story – the connection of the early Staufer with the ‚Wäscherschloß', for example – are more fragile and uncertain than letters incised in marble might suggest.[19] It is not just that the high-medieval emperors invoked on all sides almost never actually visited their family's hilltop castle. (There is solid evidence for only one such stay at the Hohenstaufen, by Barbarossa in 1181.)[20] More fundamentally, the ‚Hohenstaufen era' itself turns out to be of highly unstable shape and extent, and to be almost wholly a later construct – or rather, multiple, assorted later constructs – reflecting assumptions and serving enthusiasms and aspirations that only emerged after (and largely because) the Staufer had passed from the scene.

Chronologies fluctuate wildly. Local and regional histories, rooted in the German south-west, tenaciously seek out the family's earliest, uncertain traces, pushing the story back to the early eleventh century. Hansmartin Schwarzmaier's recent history, which covers a two-hundred-year period beginning with Duke Frederick I's enfeoffment in 1079, has the revealing subtitle *Wegstationen einer schwäbischen Königsdynastie*.[21] Studies with a focus

[18] Akermann (as Anm. 16), S. 11.
[19] Görich, *Die Staufer* (as Anm. 9), S. 20–21.
[20] Hans-Martin Maurer, *Der Hohenstaufen: Geschichte der Stammburg eines Kaiserhauses*, Stuttgart/Aalen 1977, S. 30–31. Since Barbarossa made recorded stays at other sites in the region, further short unattested visits to the castle may well have occurred.
[21] Hansmartin Schwarzmaier, *Die Welt der Staufer: Wegstationen einer schwäbischen Königsdynastie*, Leinfelden-Echterdingen 2009 (Bibliothek Schwäbischer Geschichte 1).

on the Hohenstaufen as emperors start much later, in 1138 – or even in 1152, ignoring Konrad III, who was never crowned by the pope in Rome, as insufficiently imperial. When Frederick II's offspring are also excluded, on the same basis, the Hohenstaufen era can be compressed into a mere century.[22] Histories written, as down to the mid-twentieth century they characteristically were, from a German-nationalist viewpoint often celebrated the reign of Barbarossa as a high-point while sometimes omitting altogether his supposedly un-German grandson.[23] By contrast, recent studies informed by contemporary transnational perspectives have tended for that reason to gravitate towards the later Staufer, with their wider, extra-European cultural horizons.[24] We seem to confront a variable-geometry *Stauferzeit*, almost endlessly adjustable in response to the shifting requirements of its modern votaries.

Given the nature of the subject-matter, this can come as no surprise. There is little reason to think that, at least before the final decades of the family's existence, its members even thought of themselves as comprising a single dynasty, in the sense of an exclusive father-to-son descent line. Even the accustomed names are absent, or when they do appear it is with different and more limited meanings than those of familiar modern usage. The German vernacular ‚Staufer' is first encountered in 1260, not long before the dynasty's extinction.[25] The toponymic form ‚of Staufen' appears earlier, but probably only to designate those members of the family who exercised lordship from the eponymous castle.[26] Not before the thirteenth century are emperors occasionally referred to in this way. The letter of Frederick II from the year 1247, which invokes a *domus Stoffensis* – a ‚house of Staufen' – is without parallel.[27] For members of the family and their literate supporters there could be no ‚Hohenstaufen' history, because the connections that mattered were to different, more remote and illustrious, pasts.

When Otto of Freising wrote of the ‚Henrys of Waiblingen' from whom emperors were descended, it was in order to trace Barbarossa's ancestry through the female line to the

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[22] Josef Fleckenstein, *Das Bild der Staufer in der Geschichte: Bemerkungen über Möglichkeiten und Grenzen nationaler Geschichtsbetrachtung*, Göttingen 1984 (Göttinger Universitätsreden 72), S. 8.
[23] For Frederick II's ambivalent place in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany historiography: Marcus Thomsen, *„Ein feuriger Herr des Anfangs…": Kaiser Friedrich II. in der Auffassung der Nachwelt*, Ostfildern 2005 (Kieler historische Studien Bd. 42).
[24] An example: Karen Ermete und Mamoun Fansa (Hg.), *Kaiser Friedrich II. 1194-1250: Welt und Kultur des Mittelmeerraums*, Mainz 2008 (Schriftenreihe des Landesmuseums für Natur und Mensch 55).
[25] *Kaiserchronik (Erste Bairische Fortsetzung)*, hg. von Edward Schröder, Berlin 1895 (MGH Deutsche Chroniken 1), S. 397, V. 23–26: *Hie nâch vert aber ain maere von einem Stoufaere: Friedrich war er genant, herzoge er was in Swâbenlant*.
[26] Werner Hechberger, *Staufer und Welfen 1125-1190: Zur Verwendung von Theorien in der Geschichtswissenschaft*, Köln u.a. 1996 (Passauer historische Forschungen 10), S. 110–111.
[27] *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, hg. von J.-L.-A. Huillard-Bréholles, Bd. 6.i, Paris 1860, S. 515; Hechberger (as Anm. 26), S. 112.

Salians and, beyond them, the Carolingians.[28] Where a conception of imperial blood, and even of imperial destiny conveyed through blood, found expression, this could not be of recent origin. Gottfried of Viterbo, writing in praise of the young Henry VI, traced his lineage back, via the Franks and the Trojans, to the god Jupiter.[29] The whole concentration of high-medieval emperorship was upon continuities with illustrious, legitimizing pasts, and not with the breaches that mark out a historical epoch. The Archpoet understood the duties of imperial panegyric when he compared Barbarossa with Charlemagne.[30] By his day even more important than the Carolingian was the Roman template. Numbering the Empire's current ruler in continuous sequence from Caesar or Augustus, and bedecking him with Romanising titles, had been established practice since the eleventh century.[31] The Romeward turn continued under the Staufer. Barbarossa, who patronized the schools of Bologna, named Constantine, Valentinian, Theodosius, and Justinian as his forebears.[32] The trend would be carried much further under his Italian-born grandson.[33] The growing importance, at the end of the Staufer period, of pope-emperor chronicles beginning with Christ and Augustus, served further to reinforce and to popularize the vision of a single, unbroken, Roman imperial history.[34]

The view encountered in older scholarship, which located the Hohenstaufen emperors at the centre of a well co-ordinated propaganda machine, projecting a consistent and highly

[28] *Ottonis et Rahewini Gesta Friderici I. imp.*, hg. von G. Waitz (MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum 46), Hannover/Leipzig 1912, S. 104; Tilman Struve, „Vorstellungen von ‚König' und ‚Reich' in der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts", in: *Stauferreich im Wandel: Ordnungsvorstellungen und Politik in der Zeit Friedrich Barbarossas*, hg. von Stefan Weinfurter, Stuttgart 2002 (Mittelalter-Forschungen 9), S. 308.
[29] Gottfried of Viterbo, *Speculum regum*, hg. von Georg Waitz, in: MGH Scriptores 22, Hannover 1872, S. 37–38. For Gottfried and the idea of heredity: Struve, „Vorstellungen" (as Anm. 28), S. 299–301; Thomas Foerster, „Der Prophet und der Kaiser: Staufische Herrschaftsvorstellungen am Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts", in: *Staufisches Kaisertum im 12. Jahrhundert: Konzepte – Netzwerke – Politische Praxis*, hg. von Stefan Burkhardt u.a., Regensburg 2010, S. 259–260.
[30] *Gedichte des Archipoeta*, hg. von Heinrich Watenphul und Heinrich Krefeld, Heidelberg 1954, S. 68–72, Strophe 16.
[31] Gottfried Koch, *Auf dem Wege zum Sacrum Imperium: Studien zur ideologischen Herrschaftsbegründung der deutschen Zentralgewalt im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert*, Wien u.a. 1972 (Forschungen zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte 20).
[32] Peter Ganz, „Friedrich Barbarossa: Hof und Kultur", in: *Friedrich Barbarossa: Handlungsspielräume und Wirkungsweisen des staufischen Kaisers*, hg. von Alfred Haverkamp, Sigmaringen 1992 (Vorträge und Forschungen 40), S. 633; Heinrich Appelt, „Die Kaiseridee Friedrich Barbarossas", *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse: Sitzungsberichte* 253 (1967), S. 1–32; Robert L. Benson, „Political *renovatio*: Two Models from Roman Antiquity", in: *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, hg. von Robert L. Benson und Giles Constable, Oxford 1982, S. 339–386.
[33] Hans Martin Schaller, „Die Kaiseridee Friedrichs II.", in: *Probleme um Friedrich II.*, hg. von Josef Fleckenstein, Sigmaringen 1974 (Vorträge und Forschungen 16), S. 109–134.
[34] Heike-Johanna Mierau, „Die Einheit des Imperium Romanum in den Papst-Kaiser-Chroniken des Spätmittelalters", in: *HZ* 282 (2006), S. 281–312.

ambitious doctrine of rule, has in recent times given way to more sceptical assessments.[35] Even under Barbarossa, when the evidence for a circle of writers seems for a time most compelling, and is supported by signs of opinion-forming efforts by Frederick's chancery, the detailed picture is hard to discern.[36] How close a figure like Gottfried of Viterbo really stood to the Staufer court, and how far his writings reflect the views of anyone but himself, seems far from clear.[37] Motivations for writing, too, were probably far from consistent. Peter Godman's recent work on the Archpoet portrays no ideological zealot but a distinctly reluctant mouthpiece, producing on Rainald of Dassel's orders the bare minimum he could get away with: „Barbarossa", for his foot-dragging panegyrist, „was boring".[38] The *Ligurinus*-poet, who sings the praise of imperial triumphs in twelfth-century Lombardy, probably wrote as a supplicant at Barbarossa's court, not its official spokesman.[39]

The capacities of the monarchs themselves to formulate and direct any programme of self-presentation were variable at best. John Freed's monumental biography of Frederick I draws (and perhaps over-draws) a picture of a monarch ill-prepared for the throne and bereft of the cultural resources necessary to engage with abstract ideas.[40] And while Frederick's chancellor, Rainald of Dassel, appears a more promising candidate for a co-ordinating role, his tenure was relatively brief, his activities uncertain. Barbarossa's descendants, it is true, had cultural credentials stronger than his own. Henry VI would be posthumously commemorated as a poet in the Great Heidelberg *Liederhandschrift*, while the learning of Henry's Sicilian heir was to prove as remarkable as it was eccentric.[41] More generally, however, it is difficult to discern any but the broadest continuities in purpose and approach

[35] Roman Deutinger, „Imperiale Konzepte in der hofnahen Historiographie der Barbarossazeit", in: *Staufisches Kaisertum*, hg. von Stefan Burkhardt u.a. (as Anm. 29), S. 25–39. The older view is well represented by Karl Langosch, *Politische Dichtung um Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa*, Berlin 1943. The idea of a Staufer court historiography under Frederick I originated with Robert Holtzmann, „Das Carmen de Frederico I. imperatore aus Bergamo und die Anfänge einer staufischen Hofhistoriographie", in: *NA* 44 (1922), S. 252–313.
[36] For the role of the chancery and epistolary communications, see: Timothy Reuter, „Past, Present and No Future in the Twelfth-Century Regnum Teutonicum", in: *Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, hg. von Paul Magdalino, London 1992, S. 25–26.
[37] Gerhard Baaken, „Zur Beurteilung Gottfrieds von Viterbo", in: *Geschichtsschreibung und geistiges Leben im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Heinz Löwe zum 65. Geburtstag*, hg. von Karl Hauck und Hubert Mordek, Köln/Wien 1978, S. 379–381.
[38] Peter Godman, „The Archpoet and the Emperor", in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 74 (2011), S. 58.
[39] Deutinger (as Anm. 35), S. 29–30.
[40] John B. Freed, *Frederick Barbarossa: The Prince and the Myth*, New Haven/London, 2016; and see the review by Thomas Foerster: https://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/2018.
[41] *Die große Heidelberger Liederhandschrift (Codex Manesse)*, hg. von Fridrich Pfaff, 2., verb. und erg. Aufl. bearb. von Hellmut Salowsky, Heidelberg 1984, Sp. 1–2; Charles Homer Haskins, „Science at the Court of the Emperor Frederick II", in: *American Historical Review* 27 (1922), S. 669–695.

across a span of several reigns between which lay interrupted succession and significant changes in circumstances, locations, and available material and ideological resources.

Earlier visions of the court as an ideological powerhouse reflected both an overestimate of its capacities and a misjudgement of its motivations. The effects of both kinds of misjudgement are evident, for example, in older views about the role of the sacred in Staufer conceptions of rule, as expressed particularly in the canonization of Charlemagne at Aachen in December 1165. This event was long understood as part of a larger project to ‚re-sacralise' (as well as, paradoxically, to ‚secularize') the imperial monarchy in the wake of the Investiture Contest, and to establish a basis for claims to the imperial crown independent of papal approbation. As Knut Görich has convincingly shown, however, Charles's canonization appears to have owed most to local Aachen traditions and actions.[42] And, although Barbarossa devoutly professed the Frankish saint to be his model in ruling, there is little sign that the emperor and those around him sought to draw ideological capital, or derive constitutional consequences, from his sainthood.

The Hohenstaufen generally played remarkably little part in their own ideological construction. Part of the explanation is that they simply lacked the means to pursue any such project. A recent study of Barbarossa's visual representations has emphasized the absence of any firm evidence for the court's involvement in the production of images of the monarch.[43] Invariably, these reflect instead local perspectives and interests. An example is the famous painting of the enthroned emperor with his sons in the Weingarten manuscript of the *Historia Welforum*.[44] This probably owed its origins to an institutional concern to integrate the Staufer, as the monastery's powerful new protectors, into a pre-existing Welf tradition of patronage. An itinerant court, like Barbarossa's, lacked the means to plan and execute a programme of image-making in the emperor's name. Modern scholarship has rejected, at least for the early Staufer, the existence of anything that can be termed a ‚court' style, whether in monumental architecture or in smaller objects of patronage: regional forms and workshop traditions held sway.[45] The belief that the ‚Cappenberg bust', logo and star exhibit of the 1977 Hohenstaufen exhibition, was made to project an image of the emperor, although

[42] Knut Görich, „Karl der Große – ein ‚politischer Heiliger' im 12. Jahrhundert?", in: *Religion and Politics in the Middle Ages/Religion und Politik im Mittelalter: Germany and England in Comparison/Deutschland und England im Vergleich*, hg. von Ludger Körntgen und Dominik Waßenhoven, Berlin 2013 (Prinz-Albert-Studien 29), S. 117–155.
[43] Knut Görich, „BarbarossaBilder – Befunde und Probleme", in: *Barbarossabilder: Entstehungskontexte, Erwartungshorizonte, Verwendungszusammenhänge*, hg. von Knut Görich und Romedio Schmitz-Esser, Regensburg 2014, S. 9–29.
[44] Görich, „BarbarossaBilder" (as Anm. 43), S. 20.
[45] Ganz (as Anm. 32), S. 643–50.

still finding occasional defenders,[46] is now widely dismissed. The Stuttgart crowds were probably not gazing at Barbarossa after all.

The gravitational pull of the local, and the limited capacity of an itinerant court to impose larger, unifying meanings, are a recurrent element in the Staufer era north of the Alps. It was not that the resources for larger projects were altogether lacking. The library at the imperial palace at Hagenau, for example, was evidently well stocked; but the court came to Hagenau, as to its other calling points in the German south-west, only periodically.[47] The difference that this made becomes clear when comparison is drawn with the self-presentation of Barbarossa's cousin Henry the Lion as duke of Saxony.[48] Henry developed at Braunschweig a settled court centre of a kind that the Staufer never attained. Religious and secular building projects were combined to glorify the duke and his kin and to root them in an imagined Saxon territorial past. All this endowed his *memoria* with a quite different quality. The lion-monument which Henry set up before his palace there in 1166 was to become an object of myth and wonder without parallel among the works of his imperial kinsmen.[49]

Especially conspicuous is the absence of anything that can be called a Hohenstaufen version of history. With the prominent and important exception of the works of Otto of Freising, who wrote under unique circumstances and, as Barbarossa's uncle, from a very particular perspective, the Staufer emperors took remarkably little interest in promoting historical writing.[50] Otto's *Gesta Friderici* was not only the first imperial biography since Wipo's account of the deeds of the Salian Konrad II (r. 1027-1039); it would find no high-medieval successor.[51] Even at the cosmopolitan court of Frederick II, where poetry, science and law were cultivated by a polyglot array of distinguished masters, history found little place. The emperor himself, whose scholarship extended to authoring a remarkable handbook of scientific ornithology, took little discernible interest in the study of the past, as did a

[46] See Caroline Horch, *„Nach dem Bild des Kaisers": Funktionen und Bedeutung des Cappenberger Barbarossakopfes*, Köln u.a. 2013 (Studien zur Kunst 15).
[47] Ganz (as Anm. 32), S. 637; Ferdinand Opll, *Das Itinerar Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossas (1152-1190)*, Wien u.a. 1978 (Forschungen zur Kaiser- und Papstgeschichte des Mittelalters 1), S. 133.
[48] For what follows, see Otto Gerhard Oexle, „Die Memoria Heinrichs des Löwen", in: *Memoria in der Gesellschaft des Mittelalters*, hg. von Dieter Geuenich und Otto Gerhard Oexle, Göttingen 1994 (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 111), S. 128–177.
[49] See, for example, the account in *Braunschweigische Reimchronik*, hg. von Ludwig Weiland (MGH Deutsche Chroniken 2), Hannover 1877, S. 496, V. 2895–2900.
[50] For Otto, see Walther Lammers, *Weltgeschichte und Zeitgeschichte bei Otto von Freising*, Wiesbaden 1977 (Sitzungsberichte der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main 14).
[51] Herbert Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter: Gattungen – Epochen – Eigenart*, Göttingen [4]1987 (Kleine Vandenhoeck-Reihe 1209), S. 61–64. The early Staufer histories had been largely forgotten within a generation of their writing.

contemporary monarch like Alfonso X of Castile.[52] At a time when elsewhere in western Europe quasi-official histories, like that produced at the French royal abbey of Saint Denis, were coming into being, the Staufer never sponsored a general account of their familial past or their historical relationship with the imperial title. Lack of impetus from the centre was not, however, the only obstacle, and even a rare attempt by Frederick II to influence the historical record was evidently thwarted by the weakness of the ties between court and regions. According to the annalist of St Pantaleon, Cologne, the emperor had commanded that reference to his 1235 Mainz *curia* be made in all annals.[53] In spite of this, however, the measures enacted there were the subject of only meagre contemporary report.[54]

About the Latin histories that celebrate the deeds of the Staufer, what stands out is the meagreness and lateness of their manuscript traditions. The extensive reception enjoyed by Gottfried of Viterbo's compilations (his *Pantheon* survives in three different versions) is untypical.[55] Of the thirty-one surviving manuscripts of Otto of Freising's *Chronicle* – itself quite a modest tally, for a work that has so gripped the imaginations of modern scholars – nearly two thirds date from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. No fewer than ten of the thirteen manuscripts of Otto's account of the *Deeds* of his nephew Barbarossa come from the end of the Middle Ages.[56] The *Ligurinus* poem, which this work inspired, has no surviving medieval tradition: its earliest text comes in the printed edition by the humanist Konrad Celtis (1459-1508).[57] In this as in much else, the Hohenstaufen were shaped within history by others, well after the fact.

But it is from the German vernacular literature of their day that the Staufer are perhaps most surprisingly absent. The epics of the later twelfth century were set, with varying degrees of historicity, in ages long past.[58] While it is likely that hearers and readers would have identified a *König Rother* or the Charlemagne of the *Rolandslied* with contemporary

[52] Wolfgang Stürner, *Friedrich II.*, Bd. 2: *Der Kaiser 1220-1250*, Darmstadt 2000, S. 385–457; Joseph O'Callaghan, *The Learned King: The Reign of Alfonso X of Castile*, Philadelphia 1993, S. 131–146.
[53] *Chronica regia Coloniensis*, hg. von Georg Waitz, Hannover 1880 (MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum 18), S. 267.
[54] Jean-Marie Moeglin, „Das Erbe Ludwigs des Bayern", in: *Die Goldene Bulle: Politik – Wahrnehmung – Rezeption*, hg. von Ulrike Hohensee u.a., 2 Bde, Berlin 2009 (Berichte und Abhandlungen, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderband 12), Bd. 1, S. 25–26.
[55] Friedrich Hausmann, „Gottfried von Viterbo: Kapellan und Notar, Magister, Geschichtsschreiber und Dichter", in: *Friedrich Barbarossa*, hg. von Haverkamp (as Anm. 32), S. 624.
[56] Heinz Krieg, „Die Staufer in der Wahrnehmmung des späten Mittelalters", in: *Von Palermo zum Kyffhäuser: Staufische Erinnerungsorte und Staufermythos*, hg. von Manfred Akermann und Karl-Heinz Rueß, Göppingen 2012 (Schriften zur staufischen Geschichte und Kunst 31), S. 87.
[57] Krieg (as Anm. 56), S. 58.
[58] Wilhelm Störmer, „Königtum und Kaisertum in der mittelhochdeutschen Literatur der Zeit Friedrich Barbarossas", in *Friedrich Barbarossa*, hg. von Haverkamp (as Anm. 32), S. 581–601.

rulers of the *Reich*, and would have drawn parallels with the events of their reigns, explicit comparisons were avoided. Heinrich von Veldeke's equating of the festival celebrated by Aeneas with Barbarossa's 1184 Mainz *curia* is a solitary exception that proves the rule.[59] Nor did the rulers depicted in such works present in every case a flattering image of monarchy. Despite the importance of crusading for the Staufer kings and emperors, no Middle High German poet – not even a Friedrich von Hausen, who would die on Barbarossa's expedition to the east – seems to have glorified them as holy warriors, or to have been encouraged by the court to do so.[60] For German-language literature, as in most other forms of cultural production, there is little sign that the monarchs themselves provided direction, still less that they commissioned specific works. German vernacular chronicles of the Staufer era, with the important but hard-to-date exception of the *Saxon World Chronicle*, concentrated mainly on remote pasts.[61] The much-copied *Kaiserchronik* focused heavily upon the Roman emperors of pagan and Christian antiquity, before the imperial title's revival in the west under the Franks.[62] Rudolf von Ems, despite writing for Konrad IV, and despite praising the king's own ancestors on the throne, did not get beyond Old Testament times with his world history.[63]

Both a symptom of and partial explanation for the tenuousness of contemporary Staufer *memoria* must be sought in the multiple sites for its cultivation, their varying character, and their wide geographical diffusion. In contrast to the nodal points of modern commemoration, there existed no medieval centre dedicated to celebrating the dynasty and to constructing and interpreting its past and its relationship with the imperial title. Instead, multiple dynastic and imperial traditions and memory-sites pulled in competing directions. As time passed, the range of potential locations only grew. There were familial sites in Alsace and at the monastery of Lorch, close to the Hohenstaufen itself; but no monarch was interred in these places.[64] The bones of the seven Staufer kings and emperors of the Romans are scattered between six different locations, only two in Germany. The obscurity of

[59] *Heinrich von Veldeke*, hg. von Ludwig Ettmüller, Leipzig 1852 (Dichtungen des deutschen Mittelalters 8), S. 347–348.
[60] Störmer (as Anm. 58), S. 582.
[61] Joachim Bumke, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im hohen Mittelalter*, München 1990 (Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im Mittelalter 2), S. 345.
[62] *Kaiserchronik eines Regensburger Geistlichen*, hg. von Schröder (as Anm. 25); Eberhard Nellmann, *Die Reichsidee in deutschen Dichtungen der Salier- und frühen Stauferzeit: Annolied – Kaiserchronik – Rolandslied – Eraclius*, Berlin 1963 (Philologische Studien und Quellen 16), S. 93–116.
[63] Rudolf von Ems, *Weltchronik, aus der Wernigerode Handschrift*, hg. von Gustav Ehrismann, Berlin 1915 (Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters 20), S. 302, V. 21617–21672.
[64] Olaf B. Rader, „Von Lorch bis Palermo: Die Grablegen der Staufer als Erinnerungsorte", in: *Von Palermo zum Kyffhäuser*, hg. von Akermann und Rueß (as Anm. 56), S. 46–63; Klaus Graf, „Staufer-Überlieferung aus Kloster Lorch", in: *Von Schwaben bis Jerusalem: Facetten staufischer Geschichte*, hg. von Sönke Lorenz und Ulrich Schmidt, Sigmaringen 1995 (Veröffentlichungen des Alemannischen Instituts 61), S. 209–240.

Barbarossa's burial site was such as to inspire his nineteenth-century votaries to organize an (unsuccessful) Prussian-backed archaeological expedition to Syria to find and recover his remains.[65] The nascent development in the later twelfth century of a Staufer imperial *memoria* can be observed in the favour which the Salian mausoleum at Speyer increasingly gained as a place of interment.[66] Yet any such movement might be quickly undercut by the rival pull of other, geographically remote, memory cultures and traditions. Around the time that the youthful Frederick II was arranging for his uncle, Philip of Swabia, to be reinterred at Speyer, he was choosing for himself a porphyry sarcophagus in the Norman-Sicilian style and planning his own future repose alongside his maternal ancestors in Palermo.[67]

The clear and purposeful narrative shape ascribed to the Hohenstaufen era in the histories, dramas, poems, and paintings that proliferated from the Romantic era onward, with its familiar arc of triumph and tragedy, of destinies thwarted and postponed, has no precursor in high-medieval historical writings. Only after it had passed away did the rule of the Swabian emperors gradually attain a degree of perceived historical unity and meaning: in the two generations after Frederick II's death, some chroniclers began to take that event, or the emperor's excommunication, as the end point or starting point for their narratives.[68] Forgetting would prove to be at least as important as (highly selective) remembering for subsequent perspectives on the Staufer.[69] These were far from always being favourable. The Cologne canon Alexander of Roes, looking back from the year 1281, insisted that it was *sub Suevorum imperio* – under Swabian rule – that the authority and power of the Empire had ceased to grow and had begun instead sharply to decline.[70]

The set-piece dramas and melodramas of modern Hohenstaufen myth are largely absent, and their modern metahistorical readings entirely so, from historical writings produced at the time. An example is the encounter between Barbarossa and Henry the Lion

[65] Professor Dr. [Johann Nepomuk] Sepp, *Meerfahrt nach Tyrus zur Ausgrabung der Kathedrale mit Barbarossas Grab*, Leipzig 1879; and see Rader, „Von Lorch bis Palermo" (as Anm. 64), S. 58–59.
[66] Caspar Ehlers, *Metropolis Germaniae: Studien zur Bedeutung Speyers für das Königtum (751-1250)*, Göttingen 1996 (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 125), S. 166–183.
[67] Olaf B. Rader, „Die Kraft des Porphyrs: Das Grabmal Kaiser Friedrichs II. in Palermo als Fokus europäischer Erinnerung", in: *Europäische Erinnerungsräume*, hg. von Kirstin Buchinger u.a., Frankfurt u.a. 2009, S. 33–46.
[68] Len Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity: Authority and Crisis, 1245-1414*, Cambridge 2012, S. 345.
[69] For the remembrance and forgetfulness of different Staufer rulers, see: Hansmartin Schwarzmaier, „Könige im Umfeld Friedrichs II. Mythenbildung und geschichtliches Vergessen bei den späten Staufern", in: *Mythos Staufer: Akten der 5. Landauer Staufertagung 1.-3. Juli 2005*, hg. von Volker Herzner und Jürgen Krüger, Speyer 2010 (Veröffentlichungen der Pfälzischen Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften 105), S. 9–26.
[70] Alexander von Roes, *Memoriale*, cap. 29, in: *Alexander von Roes: Schriften*, hg. von Herbert Grundmann und Hermann Heimpel, Stuttgart 1958 (MGH Staatsschriften des späteren Mittelalters 1.i), S. 135.

early in 1176, usually localized to Chiavenna in northern Italy.[71] The meeting, at which the emperor unsuccessfully implored his cousin's aid for his Italian wars, in some accounts falling to his knees, became an axial moment in nineteenth-century visions of the Hohenstaufen tragedy.[72] With the emergence after mid-century of polemical debate focused on the proper course of medieval – and thus also contemporary – German state-making (the *großdeutsch* versus *kleindeutsch* schools), the Chiavenna incident appeared to bring contemporary constitutional issues to a focus.[73] Who had history on his side – the southward-looking emperor or the stay-at-home, state-building duke? In fact, the incident is recounted by only a relatively small number of chroniclers writing during the generation that followed. Their accounts disagree on fundamental points (including the location of the meeting) and do little to invest the incident with larger significance.

The same contrast is more starkly visible in contemporary and later responses to the deaths of the Staufer rulers themselves. The difference is illuminated particularly by the fate of Frederick II's grandson Konradin, executed in Naples in 1268 at the behest of Charles of Anjou, his victorious rival for the Sicilian throne. The death of the sixteen-year-old youth on the scaffold would inspire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many hundreds of melodramatic plays, verses and images, often coloured by contemporary xenophobic nationalism, contrasting the innocent blond-haired boy with (as they commonly appear) his swarthy southern tormentors.[74] A distinguished twentieth-century medievalist recalled how his own teacher at Vienna in the late 1930s would break down, overcome with emotion, when he came to lecture on Konradin and the end of the Staufer.[75] Yet German sources at the time, and in the decades that followed, were mostly taciturn on the matter.[76]

Contemporaries could see in such events no basis for the metahistories that they would come to sustain many centuries later. Where modern narratives would discern clear

[71] The chronicle accounts are compared in Leila Werthschulte, *Heinrich der Löwe in Geschichte und Sage*, Heidelberg 2007 (Beiträge zur älteren Literaturgeschichte), S. 128–140. The short but dramatic version in the *Saxon World Chronicle* proved particularly influential for subsequent views: *Sächsische Weltchronik*, hg. von Ludwig Weiland (as Anm. 49), S. 229.
[72] For its prominence in historicist painting, see Kurt Löcher, „Die Staufer in der bildenden Kunst", in *Die Zeit der Staufer* (as Anm. 13), Bd. 3, S. 297–298.
[73] For the debate, see: Fedor Schneider (Hg.), *Universalstaat oder Nationalstaat: Macht und Ende des Ersten deutschen Reiches (Die Streitschriften von Heinrich v. Sybel und Julius Ficker zur deutschen Kaiserpolitik des Mittelalters)*, Innsbruck ^{2}1943; for the role of Barbarossa and Henry the Lion: Berg (as Anm. 7), S. 90–106.
[74] Andreas Müller, *Das Konradin-Bild im Wandel der Zeit*, Bern/Frankfurt am Main 1972 (Geist und Werk der Zeiten 34); Will Sauer, *Konradin im deutschen Drama*, Halle (Saale) 1926.
[75] Stuttgart, Hauptstaatsarchiv, Q3/36b Bü 1218. The printed but unpublished memoir by Professor Hansmartin Decker-Hauff („Wer mich erzählen lehrte") here refers to the Austrian medievalist Hans Hirsch.
[76] Scales (as Anm. 68), S. 195, 344–345. There are signs of an anecdotal memory of Konradin developing in the course of the later Middle Ages.

meanings, medieval reactions are characterized by confusion, ambivalence, and contradiction. Differences in the details of how Barbarossa met his end at the Saleph – instantaneously, or only after he had confessed his sins and received unction? – clearly reflected contemporary anxieties about possible divine judgment on the emperor, reflected in a sudden death while on crusade.[77] Even that most divisive of emperors, Frederick II, mostly attracted, at least in Germany, the opposite of clear judgments from contemporaries. Chronicle accounts composed at the time of Frederick's bitter denouement with the papacy often reveal their authors as torn between imperialist sympathies and distress at the state of the Church, and as inclined to blame both sides or to evade explicit positions altogether.[78] Only in the years immediately following his death did more cohesive webs of significance start to be woven around the last Staufer emperor.

But it was in the fifteenth century, with the beginnings of German humanism, that the Hohenstaufen first became the subject of detailed historical reconstruction.[79] The terms on which they do so are revealing. A harbinger of the new interest in the dynasty is the conciliarist Dietrich of Niem (c. 1345-1418), writing in the time of the papal Schism at the beginning of the century and seeking solutions. Dietrich was outspoken in his defence both of Barbarossa and of Frederick II, declaring that the former had lived and died neither as a devious serpent nor a Church-persecuting dragon, but as an orthodox, deeply Christian man.[80] Dietrich's choice of language makes clear what had moved him to take the side of the Staufer emperors: the polemical utterances of their opponents in the Church, who had hurled precisely such images of supernatural evil – of dragons, serpents, and basilisks – against them.

Reformation propaganda of German authorship was to return to the fate of Konradin, but with a twist: illustrated broadsheets would circulate portraying not Charles of Anjou but the pope himself swinging a huge two-handed sword at the neck of the hapless, kneeling youth.[81] Klaus Schreiner has traced the development of the legend which maintained that,

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[77] Knut Görich, *Friedrich Barbarossa: Eine Biographie*, München 2011, S. 587–597.
[78] Andrea Sommerlechner, *Stupor mundi? Kaiser Friedrich II. und die mittelalterliche Geschichtsschreibung*, Wien 1999 (Publikationen des Historischen Instituts beim Österreichischen Kulturinstitut in Rom. Abteilung 1, Abhandlungen, Bd. 11), S. 34–48, 103–112, 193–202, 209–219.
[79] Krieg (as Anm. 56), S. 84–89.
[80] Dietrich von Nieheim, *Viridarium imperatorum et regum Romanorum*, hg. von Alphons Lhotsky und Karl Pivec, Stuttgart 1956 (MGH Staatsschriften des späteren Mittelalters 5.i), S. 51–58; Hermann Heimpel, *Dietrich von Niem (c. 1340-1418)*, Münster 1932, S. 227–228.
[81] Kurt Stadtwald, *Roman Popes and German Patriots: Antipapalism in the Politics of the German Humanist Movement from Gregor Heimburg to Martin Luther*, Genève 1996 (Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance 299), S. 201.

when Barbarossa met with Alexander III to make peace at Venice in 1177, the pope had not only required that Frederick kiss his foot (as he had indeed done) but had stepped on the emperor's neck in a gesture of triumph over evil.[82] The story, entirely absent from medieval sources in Germany, attained prominence in the early sixteenth century at the hands of Luther and other reformers. It points to the way in which, over the course of time, one central aspect of the Hohenstaufen era came to endow the period and its protagonists with a distinctive historical shape and meaning: the relationship of the Staufer emperors with the Church and with the course of Christian history. In this sense at least Maßmann was correct: Barbarossa did eventually take his place on the path that led to Luther.

A distinctive element in medieval imperial doctrine was its propensity to understand past and future politics through a vocabulary of supernatural good and evil. No other medieval European polity is comparable to the Empire in this respect. An important turning point came with the Investiture Contest, which saw both sides deploy lurid eschatological imagery, not because they necessarily thought the End really was at hand, but as a discourse of political defamation: a means of commenting on and judging the present more than predicting the future.[83] This continued and intensified under the Staufer: some of those who identified the latter as heirs to the Salian emperors did so in order to underline their baleful inheritance of persecuting the Church. It was this lineage that Innocent III had in mind when he denounced Philip of Swabia as originating „from a stock of persecutors" (*de genere persecutorum*).[84] But the pope also identified Philip more precisely as an offspring of „the house of the dukes of Swabia". It was in this way that, partly via the pens of their adversaries, the Hohenstaufen gradually attained a firmer dynastic identity. Innocent IV articulated just such a sense of fatal blood continuity when he urged, of Frederick II, „let not the sceptre of rule remain with him or be transferred to his brood of vipers".[85] The same pope reportedly forbade that the excommunicate Frederick be referred to as emperor, but as *Fridericus de*

[82] Klaus Schreiner, „Vom geschichtlichen Ereignis zum historischen Exempel: Eine denkwürdige Begegnung zwischen Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa und Papst Alexander III. in Venedig 1177 und ihre Folgen in Geschichtsschreibung, Literatur und Kunst", in: *Mittelalter-Rezeption: Ein Symposion*, hg. von Peter Wapnewski, Stuttgart 1986 (Germanistische Symposien. Berichtsbände 6), S. 145–176.
[83] Hans-Werner Goetz, „Endzeiterwartung und Endzeitvorstellung im Rahmen des Geschichtsbildes des früheren 12. Jahrhunderts", in: *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, hg. von Werner Verbeke u.a., Leuven 1988 (Mediaevalia Lovaniensia. Series 1. Studia 15), S. 306–332; Tilman Struve, „Endzeiterwartungen als Symptom politisch-sozialer Krisen im Mittelalter", in: *Ende und Vollendung: Eschatologische Perspektiven im Mittelalter*, hg. von Jan A. Aertsen u. Martin Pickavé, Berlin/New York 2002 (Miscellanea mediaevalia 29), S. 206–227.
[84] Hechberger (as Anm. 26), S. 139, 146.
[85] *MGH Epistolae saeculi XIII e registris pontificum Romanorum*, Bd. 2, hg. von Carl Rodenberg, Berlin 1887, Nr. 585, S. 416: *in vipeream eius propaginam transferatur* .

Stoupha.[86] The anti-Staufer Rhinelander Alexander of Roes reported the currency in late thirteenth-century Germany of a prophecy anticipating the imminent coming of a persecuting emperor „from this Frederick's seed, a sinful root by the name of Frederick".[87]

The language of eschatological denunciation attained its most extreme form under the last Staufer. This reflected in part the intensity of Frederick II's fight to the death against the papacy, but it also attested to the role of new ideas and new audiences for them. The teachings of the Calabrian abbot Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202) here marked a crucial turning point. Now, not only the persecuting Antichrist but the age of spiritual bliss scheduled immediately to follow was tantalisingly close at hand.[88] For Abbot Joachim's devotees, the impending wicked chastiser was to be awaited almost with longing. All the signs were that he would be an emperor of the Swabian house. Joachim himself was admittedly vague on the matter, though there seems no doubt that he thought the coming persecutor would be a ruler of the Empire.[89] The necessary details were in any case easily added with hindsight. According to the Italian friar Salimbene, when Henry VI met with Abbot Joachim for a private audience, the latter had informed him that his infant son Frederick was evil and would shake the world.[90] The Joachimite template offered scope both for unfolding a dark vision of the Empire's long-term history and for placing the contemporary monarch within a historical rogues' gallery. A pseudo-Joachimite tract composed shortly after Frederick II's death accordingly depicts the Apocalyptic beast, four of whose seven heads are identified with ancient or medieval Roman emperors. The largest and most fearsome of them is clearly labelled *Fridericus secundus*.[91]

If the Hohenstaufen were damned by their opponents, with the passage of time in ever more extreme ways, as agents of supernatural evil, they also attained for their adherents an increasingly firm identity as divinely-appointed doers of good, with a special place in the future history of the church. The assiduousness with which successive Staufer monarchs

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[86] Hechberger (as Anm. 26), S. 112.
[87] Alexander von Roes, *Memoriale*, cap. 30 (as Anm. 70), S. 136.
[88] See generally Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism*, Oxford 1969.
[89] Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, New York 1979 (Records of civilization 96), S. 133. Joachim's later interpreters were clear that the persecuting ‚Chaldaeans' to whom he referred were the Empire's German bearers: S. 176–177.
[90] *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, hg. von Joseph L. Baird u.a., Binghamton 1986 (Medieval & Renaissance texts & studies 40), S. 5.
[91] Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 3822 (fol. 5^{r}): https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3822; and see Alexander Patchovsky, „The Holy Emperor Henry ‚the First' as One of the Dragon's Heads of Apocalypse: On the Image of the Roman Empire under German Rule in the Tradition of Joachim of Fiore", in: *Viator* 29 (1998), S. 291–322.

associated themselves with the creation and translation of saints, even if their actions lacked a consistently anti-Gregorian ‚constitutional' purpose, can only have strengthened this impression.[92] The crowned emperor in any case wore the radiant Jerusalem of the Apocalypse on his head.[93] Walther von der Vogelweide accordingly instructed Philip of Swabia, in mystical language, on the marvellous properties of the imperial crown, whose distinctive jewel – the *Waise* – was the guiding star of all princes.[94] The ideas sustaining such a view were far from novel. Indeed, the roots of both the negative and the positive accounts of the Roman emperor's special role in Christian history rely on patristic texts, and ultimately on the Gospels and on Christian readings of Old Testament prophecy.[95] These were reinforced for the medieval reader by a vast and tangled corpus of ‚Sibylline' texts and by emperor-prophecies taken over in the early Middle Ages from Byzantium, as well as by the modern theories of Joachim. New in the thirteenth century was the urgency with which such notions now found expression and, crucially, their identification with a specific ruling line.

Precisely what role, and how explicit a role, eschatological ideas played in Hohenstaufen political theology is difficult to judge. Where precisely to locate the *Ludus de Antichristo* relative to Barbarossa's court remains a matter for debate; but it is hard to think of another medieval ruler being ascribed a role in the history of the Last Things comparable to that played by the emperor in the *Ludus*.[96] The importance of eschatology to the emperors themselves is likewise hard to assess. Did Henry VI, as some scholars have proposed, really regard himself as in some fashion the Last Emperor?[97] The strong and sustained association of the Staufer with the crusade and the city of Jerusalem was by the thirteenth century beyond doubt. The bloodless recovery of that city by the excommunicate Frederick II in 1229 inevitably encouraged the rival speculations of friends and foes about that emperor's predestined role in Christian history.[98] When Barbarossa took a hard line with the recalcitrant

[92] Jürgen Petersohn, „Kaisertum und Kultakt in der Stauferzeit", in: *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter*, hg. von Jürgen Petersohn, Sigmaringen 1994 (Vorträge und Forschungen 42), S. 101–146.
[93] Reinhart Staats, *Die Reichskrone: Geschichte und Bedeutung eines europäischen Symbols*, Göttingen 1991, S. 55.
[94] Hans Böhm, *Walther von der Vogelweide: Minne – Reich – Gott*, Stuttgart 1949, S. 92.
[95] For this and what follows, see Hannes Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit: Entstehung, Wandel, und Wirkung einer tausendjährigen Weissagung*, Stuttgart 2000 (Mittelalter-Forschungen 3), S. 15–104. For ‚Sibylline' texts: G. L. Potestà, „Sibyllinische Bücher", in: *Lexikon des* Mittelalters, Bd. 7, München 1995, Sp.1832–1833; for Byzantine ‚last emperor' prophecies: Paul J. Alexander, „The Medieval Legend of the Last Roman Emperor and its Messianic Origin", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978), S. 1–15.
[96] Gisela Vollmann-Profe, „Tegernseer Ludus de Antichristo", in *²VL*, Bd. 9, Berlin/New York 1995, Sp. 673–679.
[97] Hermann Jakobs, „Weltherrschaft oder Endkaiser? – Ziele staufischer Politik im ausgehenden 12. Jahrhundert", in: *Die Staufer im Süden: Sizilien und das Reich*, hg. von Theo Kölzer, Sigmaringen 1996, S. 23–28; Foerster (as Anm. 29), S. 260–261, 264.
[98] Möhring (as Anm. 95), S. 212–219.

cities of the Lombard plain, when Frederick II legislated against heretics, were they in some sense acting out the role of the *katechon* of the Pauline epistle, shoring up the dam wall against the tide of evil that would one day submerge it?[99] Does this way of thinking help us explain the late Staufer court's increasingly assiduous and convincing imitation, now enriched by the resources of southern Italy, of the cultural styles and models of Roman antiquity – a return to the glorious days of Augustus Caesar, that were also the time of Christ?[100] By this point the emperor's partisans, most explicitly in the south but in Germany too, were reaffirming the idea adumbrated by Gottfried of Viterbo, that the Staufer were a dynasty divinely appointed to rule until the end of time.[101]

Around the middle of the thirteenth century, for diverse groups and from directly opposed perspectives, a Staufer dynasty – we can even begin to say, a Staufer ‚history' – was starting to become a necessity. It was to be a history defined in dynamic intersection with prophecy.[102] The dynastic signifier ‚Frederick' was itself a bearer of significant ideas about past and future – and not only for Frederick II, who reputedly punished a hapless notary who misspelt it with the loss of his thumb.[103] The Thuringian chronicler Johannes Rothe, writing towards the middle of the fifteenth century, told of the heretics who in his day were awaiting the coming of a mystical emperor, who would recover the holy places and lay down his crown at Jerusalem. He would be called Friedrich for the peace – *Friede* – that he made, even if that was not his baptismal name.[104] The adherents of the coming emperor Frederick looked for him at the ruined Staufer castle on the Kyffhäuser, where he had been seen to walk in spirit.

The Staufer lived on in late medieval Germany, where they were remembered at all, not only as memory but as (hazy, but periodically potent) expectation. In time, that expectation attached itself to specific places. Rückert and the Grimms were able to popularize the Kyffhäuser legend, and to identify it definitively with Barbarossa, because they had authentically late medieval sources (and their elaborations by seventeenth- and eighteenth-

[99] 2 Thess. 2,7. For the Empire as *katechon*, see Jakobs (as Anm. 97), S. 18–21.
[100] For a single remarkable, if enigmatic and problematic, example of late-Staufer imperial antiquarianism, see Emily Albu, *The Medieval Peutinger Map: Imperial Roman Revival in a German Empire*, New York 2014.
[101] Schaller, „Die Kaiseridee" (as Anm. 33), S. 118–119.
[102] Hans Martin Schaller, „Endzeiterwartungen und Antichrist-Vorstellungen in der Politik des 13. Jahrhunderts", in: *Ideologie und Herrschaft im Mittelalter*, hg. von Max Kerner, Darmstadt 1982 (Wege der Forschung 530), S. 305–324; Möhring (as Anm. 95), S. 209–223.
[103] *Chronicle of Salimbene* (as Anm. 90), S. 352.
[104] *Düringische Chronik des Johann Rothe*, hg. von R. v. Liliencron, Jena 1859 (Thüringische Geschichtsquellen 3), S. 426: *und den nenne man Frederich umb fredis willen den her machit*.

century antiquarians) to look back to.[105] Its seeming promise spoke to their hopes and longings, formed in very different times. It spoke to the very nineteenth-century concerns of Hans Ferdinand Maßmann. For him, too, just as for those late medieval Germans awaiting the promised return of the emperor Frederick, vaguely looking back was a way of looking forward. It is this above all that connects a figure like Maßmann to the Hohenstaufen dynasty and their prophetic legacy, and that sets him clearly apart from the exhibition-goers of the late twentieth century. The crowds who packed into the Old Residence in Stuttgart in the spring of 1977 may have pushed and elbowed one another for a better view of the emperor Frederick; but they did not – in any sense – want him back.

[105] Albrecht Timm, *Der Kyffhäuser im deutschen Geschichtsbild*, Göttingen 1961 (Studien zum Geschichtsbild 3), S. 12–16. Explicit identification of the subterranean ‚Frederick' as Barbarossa was rare before the Romantic era, however: Georg Voigt, „Die deutsche Kaisersage", *HZ* 26 (1871), S. 131–187.